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Wennerstrom Gets Life Term In Sweden as a Spy for Soviet

*Ex-Colonel, Once Assigned
in U.S., Will Be Eligible
for Parole in 10 Years*

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STOCKHOLM, June 12—Stig Wennerstrom was convicted today of "gross espionage" on behalf of the Soviet Union and sentenced to "hard labor for life."

Justice Ministry officials said this meant the retired air force colonel, who is 57 years old, could be paroled in 10 years.

Wennerstrom was not taken to the Magistrate's Court to hear the verdict. In accordance with Swedish practice, a copy of the verdict and sentence unanimously agreed to by the magistrate and the nine-member jury was sent to him in Langholmen Prison.

His court-appointed attorney, Carl Erik Lindahl, discussed the sentence and verdict with him across a table in a visiting room.

News Taken Impassively

Mr. Lindahl said his client had taken the news impassively because it was "what he had expected." Before and during the trial, Wennerstrom admitted that he was a Soviet spy from 1948 until his arrest on June 20, 1963.

Wennerstrom was also ordered stripped of his rank of colonel in the air force reserve. Officials said this meant loss of a pension but not of a small annuity to which he contributed during his air force years and from which he is to start collecting at the age of 65.

Magistrate G. Ingvar Agren and the jury also agreed that Wennerstrom should be made "liable" to pay the state the equivalent of about \$98,000. This is the amount the prosecution said it had been able to prove he had received from the Russians for providing information "gravely endangering" Swedish security.

However, failure to pay this sum — and his attorney said Wennerstrom did not have the money — will have no effect on his eligibility for parole, officials said.



Associated Press

Stig Wennerstrom

Money Confiscated

The sentence included confiscation of the equivalent of \$3,000 found in his home after his arrest. But Wennerstrom is due to get back \$1,000 that he had set aside as a wedding gift for one of his two daughters.

Mr. Lindahl said he did not think Wennerstrom would file an appeal to try to get a shorter sentence.

The trial of Wennerstrom, reputedly the most dangerous spy uncovered in Sweden, lasted from April 9 to Mid-May. Most sessions were secret. He was indicted and convicted on three counts of "gross espionage," or espionage in the first degree.

The first count covered his service as Swedish air attaché in Moscow from January, 1949, to January, 1952. According to a summary of his testimony, he

agreed during that time to expand earlier service for the Russians into a permanent arrangement. He said he was to concentrate on "the American sector" and other areas of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The Second Count

The second count covered his service as air attaché in Washington, where he was highly regarded, from April, 1962, to May, 1957.

Besides furnishing the Russians data on United States armaments, he said he had provided information on Washington's views on possible miscalculations in Moscow and a possible "war by accident."

He said he had been able to satisfy Moscow, for example, that rumors of United States plans for a surprise attack on the Soviet Union were false.

Wennerstrom moved Washington social circles — as he did in the American community in Stockholm. He was a tall, suave, distinguished-looking officer, smooth in his small talk at parties, smooth on the dance floor and a popular figure at social occasions.

He said later that he had never had any trouble getting information from his American contacts. He provided data on the United States Strategic Air Command and even on some nuclear weapons, he said.

In his tours of defense industry plants, he said, he frequently used bribes to obtain access to documents. This, he commented, is a method not uncommon in the United States.

Part of the prosecution's case in support of the second count was disallowed by the Magistrate and jury on the ground of insufficient evidence.

The third count covered the period from Oct. 1, 1957, to June 19, 1963, the day before Wennerstrom's arrest.

For the first four years of that period he was air force liaison officer in the Defense Ministry here and it was then that he was considered to have done the most damage to Swedish defense.

Retiring from the air force in 1961, he spent the last two years of his espionage career as a Foreign Ministry specialist on disarmament.